United Nations A/52/462

General Assembly

Distr.: General
14 October 1997
English
Original: English/Spanish

Fifty-second session
Agenda item 32

Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic

Report of the Secretary-General

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97-27334 (E) 241097

I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-first session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 51/19 of 14 November 1996 on the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic in which, *inter alia*, it took note of the report of the Secretary-General (A/51/458) and requested the relevant organizations, organs and bodies of the United Nations system to render all appropriate assistance which States of the zone might seek in their joint efforts to implement the objectives of the zone. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to keep the implementation of its resolution 41/11 of 27 October 1986 and subsequent resolutions on the matter under review and to submit a report to the Assembly at its fifty-second session, taking into account, *inter alia*, the views expressed by Member States.

2. Pursuant to resolution 51/19, the Secretary-General addressed a note verbale dated 25 March 1997 to the Governments of the States Members of the United Nations, requesting their views on the implementation of the declaration of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic. On the same day, letters were also dispatched to the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations, requesting them to submit their contributions for the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General by 30 June 1997.

3. As of 30 September 1997, four Governments had replied and communications had been received from six of the organizations and United Nations bodies addressed. Those replies are reflected in sections II and III of the present report. Any further replies received will be incorporated in an addendum to the report.

II. Replies received from Governments

A. Argentina

[Original: Spanish]
[25 June 1997]

1. The Argentine Republic is pleased to transmit the following observations concerning the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic. It is important to recall the continuing colonial situation of the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands, which affects the territorial integrity of the Argentine Republic. Despite the good relations now existing between the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the efforts made by Argentina to promote dialogue and a peaceful and lasting settlement of the Malvinas question, its commitment to respect the way of life of the inhabitants of the islands, and the many calls by the international community for a negotiated settlement, it has not been possible to conduct negotiations with a view to ending the dispute over sovereignty. The Argentine Republic believes that solving this important problem will make it possible to consolidate stability and cooperation in the South Atlantic on a lasting basis.

2. Argentina has participated actively in the meetings of the States members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic and fully supports the section of the Final Declaration of the States members of the zone, adopted at their fourth meeting, held at Somerset West, South Africa, on 1 and 2 April 1996, concerning efforts to combat drug trafficking. Accordingly, Argentina offered to host the fifth meeting, which will be held at Buenos Aires in April 1998.

3. With reference to the decision taken at the fourth meeting to request the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to examine ways of assisting the region, Argentina's position is that the region's needs must first be identified. Accordingly, consultations are taking place with the member countries of the troika of the zone of peace and cooperation concerning the content and scope of the cooperation programme to be requested of the Programme.

4. In its bilateral relations with South Africa, Argentina has submitted a draft framework agreement on cooperation against drug addiction and drug trafficking that is currently being analysed by the South African authorities.

5. With regard to the decision on the protection of the marine environment, adopted at the fourth meeting of the States members of the zone, Argentina notes the following:

(a) Its concern that agreement should be reached, within the competent international agencies, on adequate regulation of the carriage of so-called "INF materials" (plutonium, irradiated nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive wastes) on board ships, "adequate regulation" meaning regulation that, without detriment to the principle of freedom of navigation, gives the coastal State a primary role in ensuring that the traffic of a vessel carrying this kind of materials off its coastline creates the least possible risk to its marine environment;

(b) The importance of ensuring that States members of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic ratify the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982), as well as the international instruments — most of them adopted within the framework of the International

Maritime Organization (IMO) — regulating different aspects of the protection of the marine environment.

6. Concerning the decision on illegal fishing activities also adopted at the fourth meeting, Argentina considers it important that the States members of the zone ratify the Agreement on the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (New York, 1995).

B. Brazil

[Original: English]
[30 June 1997]

1. Brazil reaffirms its belief that the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic represents a privileged framework for cooperation and development in the region.

2. The denuclearization of the South Atlantic remains a central objective to be pursued in the context of the zone. With the increase in signatures and ratifications in both the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Pelindaba Treaty) and the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Tlatelolco Treaty), a nuclear-weapon-free South Atlantic is a reality to which Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean are progressively closer. Brazil is deeply committed to that goal. Together with 68 other countries that are members of nuclear-weapon-free zones, it co-sponsored General Assembly resolution 51/45 B of 10 December 1996 entitled "The nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas".

3. The resolution was not aimed at creating new legal obligations in the South Atlantic or in other parts of the southern hemisphere, or at contradicting international law applicable to ocean space, but rather at seeking, *inter alia*, the recognition of the emergence of a new international scenario that is conducive to the adoption of similar initiatives in other regions and to the renewal of efforts in the process of nuclear disarmament and strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

4. The illicit traffic in drugs has become a major area of concern to the members of the zone. Brazil has a firm conviction that the implementation of the anti-drug initiative, formally launched at the fourth meeting of the States members of the zone, held at Somerset West, South Africa, on 1 and 2 April 1996, will play an important role in enhancing the cooperation between the States of the zone.

5. The main purpose of the initiative is to set an adequate legal and institutional basis for the development of projects aimed at curbing the demand, production and illicit traffic in narcotics in the zone.

6. The recent approval of a resolution in the field of narcotics control, tabled in the name of the States members of the zone, at the fortieth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (E/1997/28, chap. XIV, resolution 1 (XL)), is the first step in the implementation of the anti-drug initiative. In that resolution, the Commission requested the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to examine forms of assistance that could be extended to members of the zone. It is now up to Member States and the bureau, in close consultation with the Programme, to elaborate specific projects and thus materialize the initiative.

7. The Government of Brazil believes that projects in the framework of the anti-drug initiative should be concentrated on fostering judicial, police and customs cooperation with the purpose of curbing the illegal flow of narcotics and psychotropic substances in the zone, as well as on coordinating operations for the apprehension of psychotropic substances originating from illicit traffic. Adequate mechanisms for the exchange of information and control systems for the production and commerce of chemical agents should also be established.

8. Another important area of cooperation in the zone is the protection of the marine environment. Brazil favours the adoption of a new convention on the issue, within the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, that would set up mechanisms for cooperation for the protection of the marine environment, for the conservation of marine living resources, for preventing and containing environmental accidents and for promoting both the exchange of information and concerted action in these areas.

9. The Government of Brazil is committed to continued cooperation with the members of the zone and looks forward to the fifth meeting of the States members of the zone, to be held in Argentina.

C. Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]
[24 April 1997]

1. Ecuador resolutely supports the declaration set out in General Assembly resolution 41/11 establishing a zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic and is pleased with the progress made in spreading peace in the zone and

promoting democracy and cooperation among the States of the region.

2. In this context, Ecuador trusts that the objectives laid down in the declarations adopted at Brasilia, in 1994, and at Somerset West, South Africa, in 1996, will be achieved completely.

3. Ecuador likewise considers that the States which are able to do so should provide the necessary cooperation to ensure that the objectives of the Economic Community of West African States can be fully met.

4. In this context, Ecuador feels that it is essential that Angola and Liberia should be able to achieve political stability in order to secure sustainable and equitable development on the basis of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and that this should bring prosperity to their populations and enable those States to develop extensively their economic potential.

D. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

[Original: English]
[3 July 1997]

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland welcomes the objectives of General Assembly resolution 51/19, which are to promote peace and cooperation in the South Atlantic, and wishes to draw the Secretary-General's attention to developments in Anglo-Argentine relations which have contributed to the lessening of tension in the South-West Atlantic. Cooperation continues in the forum of the South Atlantic Fisheries Commission, which has the conservation of fish stocks at the forefront of its agenda, and at the South-West Atlantic Hydrocarbons Commission where, in particular, progress is being made with arrangements for the joint development of hydrocarbons in the special cooperation area, set up by the joint declaration of 27 September 1995 between the United Kingdom and Argentina.

III. Replies received from organizations and bodies of the United Nations system

A. Department of Public Information

1. The adoption of General Assembly resolution 51/19, whose objectives are to promote peace and cooperation in the South Atlantic, was highlighted by the Department of Public Information in its daily news programmes for broadcasting organizations worldwide, including the Radio Bulletin Board, and received emphasis in its press release service on 14 November 1996. United Nations information centres and services, particularly those located in the region, publicized the action taken by the Assembly through briefings and newsletters.

2. The Radio and Central News Service covered a wide range of issues relating to the objectives of the resolution in its daily news bulletins, weekly current affairs magazines, regional magazines and feature programmes. The following items, among others, were covered extensively in various languages for regional and worldwide dissemination: nuclear-weapon-free zone in the southern hemisphere; economic and trade dimensions in the region; the fight against drug trafficking; civil wars and the peace processes in Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone; United Nations emergency relief activities; and humanitarian assistance to displaced persons. The Service also covered a press conference by Mr. James O. C. Jonah, the Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Liberia, and interviewed Mr. Lansana Kouyaté, then Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, about his mission to the region. Nine features were produced in Dutch, English, French, Kiswahili and Portuguese concerning, among others, global disarmament; a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Atlantic; development and technical cooperation between South Atlantic countries; the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR); and the formation of the Government of Unity and National Reconciliation in Angola. Furthermore, as part of the strengthening of the public information components of peacekeeping activities in the West African region, the Radio Service sent two staff radio officers on temporary assignment to Angola and Liberia.

3. The Department published *An Agenda for Democratization*, a supplemental text to two previous reports by the Secretary-General on support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies. Other relevant publications were: *The Blue Helmets: A Review of United*

Nations Peacekeeping, United Nations Peacekeeping, Year in Review 1996: UN Peace Missions, The United Nations and Human Rights, Impact of Armed Conflict on Children (a press kit and a booklet), and *Independence of the Judiciary: A Human Rights Priority.*

4. Through their newsletters, United Nations information centres and United Nations offices drew attention to the efforts of the international community with regard to the establishment of a zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic and its objectives. Commemorations, such as United Nations Day, provided important opportunities for information centres and other United Nations field offices to bring to the attention of large audiences the activities of the United Nations in Angola and Liberia, as well as the importance of major United Nations conferences and the interrelationship between them. The information centres in the region, and the United Nations Information Service in Geneva, as part of their regular activities, also highlighted matters related to the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic in press briefings, meetings with non-governmental-organizations, film screenings and through replies to public inquiries.

B. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

1. As in previous years, the main involvement of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) on the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic refers to the role played in terms of the law of the sea in the enhancement of the goals of the zone. Consequently, the activities of the programme of work of ECLAC which might be of assistance to Member States refer to the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and its related instruments (especially the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks). Similarly, it covers the need to develop some guidelines for the application of the Convention on Biological Diversity to the marine environment and the potential of interregional cooperation vis-à-vis the operation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, in which coordination among both sides of the Atlantic Ocean seems fundamental.

2. Another aspect in which the mechanisms of the zone could play an important role is in the prevention of the illegal traffic of dangerous products and wastes according to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/226 of 22 December 1989, in which interregional cooperation is strongly called for.

C. United Nations Development Programme

1. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) upholds the principles and provisions contained in General Assembly resolution 41/11 on the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic. UNDP is making headway in the implementation of the latest General Assembly resolution on this question (resolution 51/19) by providing assistance to the States of the zone.

2. UNDP has programmes in the South Atlantic that support the agreement reached at the third meeting of the member States of the zone, held at Brasilia in 1994, to encourage democracy and political pluralism and, in accordance with the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993, to promote and defend human rights and fundamental freedoms and to cooperate towards the achievement of those goals.

3. In Latin America and the Caribbean, in particular in countries that are facing challenges in the promotion and maintenance of democracy, UNDP has launched democratic governance as one of its priority programmes, aimed at creating a renewed environment that fosters plurality in order to facilitate dialogue and consensus-building regarding reforms and to strengthen democratic institutions. There are three regional networks of Governments, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations that are being created to advance the different processes throughout the region of Latin America and the Caribbean: (a) cooperation to modernize political parties and electoral processes in Santiago; (b) regional cooperation and assistance to the modernization of parliaments, which has its headquarters in São Paulo, Brazil; and (c) cooperation for reforms in the judiciary systems, in Buenos Aires.

4. In Africa, as co-lead agency with the Economic Commission for Africa of the governance component of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, UNDP has developed, in consultation with other United Nations agencies, a strategic framework called the Special Initiative on Governance in Africa. This framework provides five categories for governance-related interventions: leadership building; accountability; empowerment of civil society; political transition; and peace and stability. UNDP has established the Norway Trust Fund for support to

Governance in Africa, to which Norway has contributed US$ 10,284,810.

5. UNDP cooperates with the World Bank in its special programme of assistance to Africa in coordinating the working group on civil service reform, which concentrates on capacity development in the civil service.

6. With the same goals for the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic and in cooperation with the Government of Angola and the international donor community, UNDP is seeking the fulfilment of pledges to provide assistance in facilitating the rehabilitation of the Angolan national economy and the resettlement of displaced persons. On 6 November 1995, the UNDP Trust Fund for Angola was established to enhance UNDP programme activities in support of the Government of Angola's Programme for Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation, as agreed in the Angola Round Table Conference which took place in Brussels from 25 to 27 September 1995. The purpose of the Trust Fund is to provide assistance to the Government of Angola at both the national and provincial levels in the following areas: (a) rehabilitation of productive capacity (agriculture, small and micro enterprises); (b) rehabilitation of social sectors (education, training, primary health care and social integration); (c) rehabilitation of infrastructure (roads and bridges, water and sewerage, electricity, housing); and (d) institutional capacity-building.

7. In consultation with the Government of Angola, UNDP is preparing a new country cooperation framework, for the period 1997-1999 along the following lines: (a) provision of assistance in the post-conflict situation in order to consolidate the gains of the peace process through the reintegration of demobilized soldiers, mine clearance programme, and coordination of the transition from emergency to development; (b) promotion of poverty eradication and sustainable livelihoods through the implementation of the Programme for Community Rehabilitation and National Reconstruction, using a participatory approach; and (c) support to good governance through human resource development for the effective management of the recovery and development process, with focus on institutional reform, administrative modernization and economic management.

D. United Nations Environment Programme

In its resolution 51/19, the General Assembly takes cognizance, *inter alia*, of the importance that the States of the zone attach to environmental issues, notably the threats posed by pollution to the marine and coastal environment. Caring for marine, coastal and freshwater resources remains a major component of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and substantial assistance has been rendered to the States of the South Atlantic region. The Regional Seas Programme of UNEP for the protection, management and development of the marine and coastal environment has facilitated concerted action in responding to the concerns of the States of the zone. The respective subprogrammes provided the main framework for extending assistance to those States. The programme of work of UNEP promotes environmental security and it continues to encourage, in the South Atlantic region, subregional and regional cooperation on the environment.

E. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

1. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) promotes cooperation among the countries of the region in the field of scientific investigation of the South Atlantic and relevant ocean services, particularly through the following programmes:

(a) The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Regional Committee for the Southern Ocean, the First Southern Ocean Forum and the Sixth Session of the Committee (September 1996, Germany) recommended strengthening scientific cooperation in the Southern Ocean (including the South Atlantic region), in the following areas: climate and climatic change; ecosystems and their living resources; pollution; and monitoring establishment of global ocean observing system;

(b) The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Global Sea-Level Observing System, which includes about 40 sea level stations in the South Atlantic. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission training seminar/workshop on sea-level observations and analysis was hosted and organized by Argentina in November 1996 for the countries of South America;

(c) The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission/World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Data Buoy Cooperation Panel and its special action panel

on the International South Atlantic Buoy Programme. There was a meeting of the action panel in October 1996 at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil;

(d) The World Ocean Circulation Experiment of the WMO-UNEP-Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission-International Council of Scientific Unions World Climate Research Programme (particularly its Southern Ocean component).

F. World Meteorological Organization

WMO coordinates the monitoring of weather and climate from ships, from other types of stations such as buoys and adjacent land and polar stations as well as polar orbiting and geostationary meteorological satellites. It also ensures the issuance of weather and storm forecasts in the South Atlantic region through the national meteorological services of its concerned members.

G. International Maritime Organization

1. If funds are available, IMO can certainly assist States within the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic to address the degradation of the marine environment resulting from sea-based activities and enhance their capacity to prevent and mitigate the impact of marine pollution, with particular emphasis on the implementation of internationally agreed standards for the protection of the marine environment. These include the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973 (London, 1973), the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (London, 1972), and the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation (London, 1990). Also relevant in this connection are the IMO conventions dealing with liability and compensation for marine pollution: the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage (Brussels, 1969), the International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage, 1971, and their protocols.

2. IMO does not have funds of its own for technical cooperation activities but depends completely on UNDP, the World Bank, UNEP and other multilateral-bilateral donors for the necessary support. However, IMO will be ready to assist the countries concerned with the preparation of project proposals for funding by these organizations.